

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 IO-10 AID-05 SAB-01 OMB-01

DHA-02 ORM-01 SCCT-01 /073 W
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O R 231150Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASDDC IMMEDIATE 5439

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 5698

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SY JO

SUBJ: JORDAN/SYRIA JOINT COMMUNIQUE

REF: (A) DAMASCUS 3256

(B) FBIS JN 221300

(C) AMMAN 5687 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: LIKE EMBASSY DAMASCUS, OUR PRELIMINARY VIEW IS THAT AUGUST 23 JORDAN-SYRIA COMMUNIQUE CONTAINS NO DRAMATIC NEW DEPARTURES. DESPITE ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW SUPREME POLITICAL COMMAND, WE THINK KING HUSSEIN CERTAINLY RETAINS FINAL AUTHORITY TO DECIDE EXTENT OF FUTURE GOJ COOPERATION WITH SYRIA IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY AREAS. CONTRARY TO SOME MEDIA REPORTS, WE DO NOT READ COMMUNIQUE AS CONDEMNING STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH BUT RATHER AS HIGHLIGHTING NEED FOR A GENERAL MIDEAST SETTLEMENT. MILITARY"COORDINATION" MENTIONED (AS IT WAS IN COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT END OF PREVIOUS ASAD VISIT TO
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AMMAN) BUT NOT RPT NOT JOINT MILITARY COMMAND AND GOJ

HAS VIGOROUSLY DENIED ANY SUCH INTERPRETATION. END
SUMMARY.

2. AS SEEN FROM HERE, AUGUST 23 JORDAN-SYRIA JOINT
COMMUNIQUE ADDRESSES TWO MAJOR ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO
U.S. -- (A) ATTITUDE TOWARD STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO
PEACE SETTLEMENT IN MIDDLE EAST, AND (B) EXTENT TO
WHICH JORDAN'S MILITARY AND FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD
ISRAEL BOXED IN BY NEW JORDAN-SYRIA SUPREME POLITICAL
COMMAND.

3. COMMUNIQUE DECLARES THAT PEACE REQUIRES OVERALL
APPROACH THAT RECOGNIZES INDIVISIBILITY IN PEACE SETTLE-
MENT OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED LANDS ON ALL
FRONTS AND RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL RIGHTS OF PALESTINIANS.
STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH CRITICIZED ONLY INsofar AS IT IS
DESIGNED TO OBSCURE ("SUBMERGE") THOSE MAJOR REQUIREMENTS.
AT SAME TIME, WE READ COMMUNIQUE'S DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED
WIDER, MORE AMBITIOUS APPROACH NOT AS PROCEDURAL REQUIRE-
MENT BUT A STATE OF MIND IN WHICH ANY SERIES OF MORE
RESTRICTED EFFORTS SHOULD BE ORCHESTRATED ("THE NEED TO
WORK WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITY OF THE ISSUE").
OBVIOUSLY IMPORTANT TO SYRIA AND JORDAN (WHO FEEL ISOLATED
BY EGYPTIAN STEP ON SINAI) THAT SENSE OF MOVEMENT TOWARD
WIDER, OVERALL SETTLEMENT NEEDS TO BE MAINTAINED.

4. DESCRIPTION OF SUPREME POLITICAL COMMAND CARRIES
TWO COUNTRIES NO FURTHER DOWN ROAD OF POLICY AND
OPERATIONS COORDINATION THAN THEY HAVE BEEN BEFORE.
INDEED COMMUNIQUE COUCHES ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW INSTITU-
TION AS PART OF EFFORT TOWARD CREATING CONDITIONS FOR
CLOSER COORDINATION OF TWO COUNTRIES' POLICIES, NOT
RATIFICATION OF COORDINATION ALREADY REACHED. NOTABLE,
FOR EXAMPLE, THAT ANNOUNCEMENT OF MACHINERY FOR COORDINA-
TING FOREIGN POLICY ALTOGETHER SILENT ON SUBSTANTIVE
ISSUES CURRENTLY BEFORE TWO COUNTRIES SUCH AS ISRAELI UN
MEMBERSHIP OR PLO PRESENCE IN JORDAN. REFERENCE TO
MILITARY COORDINATION AND COOPERATION, BUT NOT RPT NOT
UNIFIED COMMAND, BRIEFLY REFERRED TO AS ITEM ALONG WITH
SEVERAL OTHERS SUBJECTS TO FUTURE DECISION OF SUPREME
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POLITICAL COMMAND. EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP
INFORMATION ON SPECIFICS OF ANY MILITARY DISCUSSIONS.

5. FOREGOING SHOULD NOT DOWNGRADE SERIOUS EFFORT OF GOJ
AND PARTICULARLY KING HUSSEIN TO KEEP MOMENTUM GOING IN
STEADILY IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH SYRIA. JORDAN'S
INVESTMENT IN THOSE CLOSER TIES NATURALLY HAS COSTS
REGARDING ITS OWN FLEXIBILITY IN FUTURE FOREIGN POLICY

AND MILITARY DECISIONS IT MAY HAVE TO MAKE WITH REGARD TO SYRIA. ON BASIS OF COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT CONCLUSION OF HUSSEIN'S RECENT VISIT TO SYRIA, HOWEVER, KING HAS RETAINED IN HIS OWN HANDS THUS FAR FINAL SUTHORITY TO DECIDE EXTENT TO WHICH JORDAN WILL COOPERATE WITH SYRIA IN FOREIGN AND MILITARY POLICY AS WELL AS OTHER AREAS. ALTHOUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF SUPREME POLITICAL COMMAND PROVIDES INSTITUTIONAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO FURTHER BILATERAL COORDINATION, WE NOTE FROM COMMUNIQUE THAT NEW STRUCTURE'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESS SEEMS STILL TO RESERVE TO EACH LEADER HIS RIGHTS TO DECIDE EACH QUESTION. PROCESS ALSO SEEMS CUMBERSOME, AND REQUIREMENT THAT TWO LEADERS MEET AT LEAST ONCE EVERY THREE MONTHS UNLIKELY TO BE EASILY SUSTAINED ON A REGULAR BASIS, THUS PROBABLY OVER TIME TARNISHING IMAGE OF SYRIAN/JORDIAN UNITY EFFORTS.
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